

# Congress of the United States

## Washington, DC 20515

August 25, 2022

The Honorable Antony Blinken  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken,

We are writing to express our concern about reports that Turkey is considering further acquisitions of the Russian S-400 missile defense system.<sup>1</sup> Twenty months since the imposition of sanctions on Turkey pursuant to the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), the Erdogan government has not only failed to come into compliance with CAATSA but has now made it clear that it intends to commit another flagrant violation of the law.

As noted in a letter we sent to you on November 1, 2021, "one of the reasons Congress insisted on Turkey's ejection from the F-35 program was because of the significant risks associated with collocating S-400s and F-35s. Experts have noted that providing Turkey the Block 70 modernization kits poses similar collocation risks if Ankara continues to possess Russian S-400s." Additional S-400s would only further increase the collocation risks. We found those risks unacceptable in November, and we find them even more unacceptable today.

As Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine continues, we cannot have a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member commit to military cooperation with the regime of Vladimir Putin. This undermines U.S. policy in Ukraine, regional peace and stability, and the very NATO alliance unity considerations the State Department has cited to Congress as the reason for considering F-16 upgrades and sales for Turkey.

During his confirmation hearing, U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Jeff Flake declared that Turkey should face additional CAATSA sanctions if it acquires additional Russian weapon systems. This is no longer a hypothetical question and Turkey's continued violation of not only U.S. law, but of the expectations of a NATO ally must be addressed immediately.

Under the present circumstances, we must restate our objection to the sale of F-16 modernization kits and/or new F-16s to Turkey. We request a briefing within the next 30 days including an update on the status of negotiations with Turkey on F-16s, how collocation concerns – especially

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<sup>1</sup> Harvey, Benjamin. "Russia, Turkey Spar Over Air-Defense Sale That US Opposes." *Bloomberg News*, 16 Aug. 2022. (<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-08-16/russia-turkey-spar-over-air-defense-sale-that-us-opposes>)

in light of additional S-400s entering the theater of concern – are being resolved, and what steps the Administration is taking to ensure the U.S.-Turkish defense relationship complies with CAATSA and others concerns of Congress. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter, and we look forward to your response.

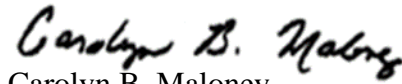
Sincerely,



Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress



Gus M. Bilirakis  
Member of Congress



Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress

Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress

Dina Titus  
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress

Nicole Malliotakis  
Member of Congress

Mario Diaz-Balart  
Member of Congress

Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress

John P. Sarbanes  
Member of Congress

Brad Sherman  
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Grace Meng  
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Ted W. Lieu  
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Jackie Speier  
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Thomas R. Suozzi  
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Jan Schakowsky  
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Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress

Josh Gottheimer  
Member of Congress